

## The Commoner.

man fights for the millions of dollars belonging to the plutocrat which is now exempt from taxation.

"Second—I would make the principal issue of the campaign of 1904 stern and unyielding opposition to the trusts and syndicates which are now crushing out individual enterprise of the country. Ten years ago a young man with \$15,000 or \$20,000 capital could start in some legitimate business with fair chance of success, but now he has no more chance against the trusts and department stores than an infant against the champion prize fighter of the world. I was told recently by a prominent broker of New York City—a very earnest republican—that nine men in New York, four of whom, J. Pierpont Morgan, George Gould, John D. Rockefeller and James J. Hill, control the finances of the United States, and, as he expressed it, no one could go into a new enterprise or remain in an old one without the consent of these nine men.

"Third—I would declare against imperialism and the colonial system, for while this issue was before the country in 1900 everything else was subordinated to the fact that the country was doing very well and ought to be left alone. If the people of the United States see proper to indorse the foreign policy of President McKinley, that of course is the end of it, but no democrat should give his approval to the colonial system of Europe."

"What about the silver question?" was asked.

"As to the free coinage of silver I have always been an earnest bimetallist and have not changed my opinions in the slightest. I do not believe that there is enough gold and silver in the world for the just and fair transaction of business, and I look upon the single standard of either gold or silver as doubling the power of oppression by the rich at the expense of the middle and poorer classes. I do not think the question of the free coinage of silver is dead, but the abnormal and unexpected production of gold, and especially improvements in the processes of extracting gold from the earth, have given us more money in this country than any one could have anticipated. We have a larger per capita circulation than any other country in the world except France, and there is no immediate prospect of any decrease."

"Do you think that bimetallism will ever be the paramount issue again?" the senator was asked.

"I believe that the time will again come when bimetallism will become the paramount issue, but it is not now a question upon which the democratic party can go into the contest in 1904," was the reply. "There are thousands of good democrats who refused to support Mr. Bryan in 1896 and 1900 because they did not believe this country could maintain free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 against the opposition of the great nations of the world. It seems to me suicidal for us to thrust this issue again upon them, when they are anxious to come back to the party on all other questions. I have no fear that the gold advocates will take possession of the democratic party, but I do fear that if we continue to quarrel over silver when there is no necessity for it we will again go 'through a slaughter house into an open grave.'

"The democratic party must come together on some honorable adjustment of the money question, for it will require the vote of every man who has ever been a democrat to defeat the republicans in the next contest."

The income tax is all right, but it would be easier to secure a uniform rate than a graded one.

Mr. Vest will find, however, that the income tax is not a harmonizing issue.

Mr. Hill fought the income tax, Mr. Cleve-

land was opposed to it, and nearly all the gold men are as hostile to it as they are to free silver.

Mr. Vest emphasizes the trust issue, but that is not a harmonizing issue either, for the financial influences stand behind the trusts as solidly as they do behind the banks. The New York Sun is already declaring that free silver would do but little damage compared with the widespread demoralization which would be produced by effective anti-trust legislation.

The question of imperialism is rightly included among the issues—in fact, its importance cannot be overstated. Mr. Vest is right in saying that the election of 1900 cannot be considered a settlement of the question of imperialism, but why does Senator Vest try to drive away the allies who are willing to help us to secure all needed reforms? Why does he prefer gold democrats who supported the republican ticket to populists who supported the democratic ticket?

He says:

"We must stop hunting around in corners and up canons for populist, socialist and single tax votes and go back to the doctrine of Mr. Jefferson, upon which alone we can achieve victory."

The senator should be a little more definite. To what planks does he refer? The only plank he speaks of discarding is the silver plank, and yet that is not nearly so populist as the income tax plank. The Senator was voting for free and unlimited coinage at the ratio of 16 to 1 without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation before the populist party came into existence. The income tax was advocated by the populist party several years before it found a place in the democratic platform. In fact, a graded income tax, such as Senator Vest and many populists advocate, never has been endorsed by a democratic national platform. This is no argument against the proposition but it shows how inconsistent the Senator is when he condemns free silver as populist and then advocates a graded income tax.

Senator Vest insists that he is still a bimetallist, and declares that the money question will again become important, but he is willing to abandon it temporarily in order to "harmonize" with men who voted the republican ticket even at the risk of destroying industrial independence and converting a republic into an empire.

Senator Vest's platform contains no reference to the question of paper money. The republicans and gold democrats favor national bank notes, while the democrats favor greenbacks. This question is entirely separate and distinct from the silver question. Why is it abandoned? The national bankers are in favor of a paper money trust which will issue and control the paper money of the country—the most dangerous of all trusts; is the senator willing to wink at this conspiracy in order to "harmonize" with the reorganizers? If we are to go back to Jeffersonian doctrines, what is more Jeffersonian than the greenback? Jefferson was the deadly enemy of banks of issue,

and yet the Senator's platform is silent on this question.

If the silver question is going to be important again, why turn the party over to the reorganizers and allow them to aid the republicans in making the silver dollar redeemable in gold?

The Senator is anxious to secure "harmony" but he will find that there can be no harmony without the surrender of every essential principle of democracy. The men who voted the republican ticket on account of the silver plank are as a rule opposed to the income tax, and are also opposed to any effective anti-trust legislation. They are in favor of national banks of issue, and are also in favor of government by injunction (a subject which Senator Vest did not mention in his proposed platform). Even on imperialism many of the gold democrats have no fixed or definite convictions. In fact, the only way to harmonize with the reorganizers is to allow them to control the organization and write a republican platform. How much is Senator Vest willing to give up in order to bring the gold corporation element back? His platform is entirely too populist to entice the deserters into the fold. Perhaps they might allow him to write the platform if they are permitted to select a candidate who will disregard the platform as Mr. Cleveland did.

## An Absurd Rumor.

A cable from London emphatically denies the rumor that Joseph H. Choate, the United States Ambassador, had left London for Holland for the purpose of visiting President Kruger. It had been reported that Mr. Kruger desired Mr. Choate to act as a mediator in bringing about a peace settlement. All of these rumors are contradicted and much trouble is taken to explain that with the exception of "a week-end visit to Sussex, Mr. Choate had not left London."

The denial and the explanation were hardly necessary. When the late Adelbert Hay was on his way to South Africa to act as United States Consul to the South African republic, he stopped over in London and paid a visit to Lord Salisbury. But it would not do for a representative of this government to call upon a representative of the stricken republic of South Africa.

As a matter of law, the relations of the United States toward Great Britain and the South African republics are similar. This government has official relations with the republic of South Africa as well as with the empire of Great Britain but we have lost no opportunity to express our kind feelings for Great Britain. This has been done by our British minister and by many of our commercial representatives abroad. But we have carefully avoided giving to the Dutch republic of South Africa any indication that we entertain for her and her people the slightest sympathy in the hours of her tribulation. For the first time in the history of this republic it has come